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Sandinistas detain 2 officers accused as CIA spies

By Paul Goepfert
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MANAGUA, Nicaragua — The Sandinista government announced yesterday the detention of two officers of the Interior Ministry who, it said, had been spying for the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency.

The accused are 2nd Lt. Reynaldo Aguado Montealegre and 2nd Lt. Jose Eduardo Trejos Silva, both administrative functionaries. The wife of Lieutenant Trejos Silva, Rosalinda Sosa, was accused of espionage as her husband's accomplice.

U.S. diplomatic officers named as the CIA contacts for the two men were identified as Benjamin B. Wickham, first political secretary, October 16, 1983, to Aug. 20, 1985; Bradley Cecil Johnson, chief of the economic section, Feb. 10, 1984, to Dec. 20, 1985; Bonnie Sue Bennet, vice consul, Nov. 22, 1985, to the present; and Stephen David Murchison, first political secretary, Aug. 22, 1985, to the present.

Suzanna Williams of the information office of the U.S. Embassy said, "As a matter of practice we do not comment on allegations of intelligence activities."

She said that Mr. Murchison and Ms. Bennet were still working in the embassy and had no immediate plans for leaving the country.

She said U.S. Ambassador Harry Bergold had been called to the Interior Ministry to receive "a diplomatic note," but she would not reveal its contents.

Before a packed conference room, surrounded by photos of the accused and the espionage apparatus that they purportedly used, Lieutenant Aguado Montealegre, dressed in civilian clothes, said he was lured to Miami by his family under the pretense that his mother was dying of cancer.

When he arrived there in October of 1985, he discovered that the story was false and that his family was being pressured and threatened by members of a Nicaraguan counter-revolutionary group, he said. If he agreed to work for the CIA, he said, his family's problems would disappear, and he would receive \$25,500 at once and \$5,000 monthly for his mother. He said he agreed.

According to Lieutenant Aguado Montealegre, his job was to pass on to his contacts in Managua the plans and timing of the ministry's opera-

tions against the "contras," the structure of command and names of officials of the ministry, and the regional plans of the ministry.

He said he was given six black Cricket lighters, two of which contained sophisticated camera systems. He said he also was given various household items with secret compartments in which to hide the special carbon paper on which he could write invisible messages.

He said he also was given chemicals in the form of sinus tablets and vitamin pills with which he could develop the secret messages he would receive. His instructions for contacts, rendezvous locations, and signals of emergency were passed to him in microfilm rolled up in a Bic pen, he said.

He went to work the third week of November, was detected at the end of January and arrested the beginning of February, he said.

Commandante Lenin Cerna, head of state security at the ministry, said that Lieutenant Trejos Silva also was recruited outside of the country, although he did not specify where and in what manner. Lieutenant Trejos Silva, apparently, was also assigned the documentation of

ministry plans and command structure.

Furthermore, Lieutenant Trejos Silva was to report on the relationship between the Sandinistas and the FMLN guerrilla organization of El Salvador and the M-19 guerrilla organization of Colombia, he said. Commandante Cerna said Lieutenant Trejos Silva communicated with his contacts both personally and by radio cipher, the code of which was exhibited on the walls of the conference room.

Lieutenant Trejos Silva reportedly began his operation in November 1983. He and his wife were arrested in February, too. According to Commandante Cerna, when arrested Lieutenant Trejos Silva admitted to having \$12,000 in payments from the CIA in a bank account in Miami.

Commandante Cerna said, "We assume that the CIA had further plans for these agents. While their information-gathering is damaging enough, they were most likely destined to participate in the misinformation campaign of the CIA against the Sandinista revolution in order to justify the United States aggression here."